1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

for mat weaving, etc., and receive their friends there, but sleep in the house with their parents. Boys live in it, coming to the father's house only for meals. All the children of a family use the house in common, but the eldest has a prior right. When the eldest son marries, he usually takes this house as his dwelling and a new one is built for the remaining children. 343 883

Every establishment with adolescent children has a house of this sort. The Tanala explain it as a defensive measure on the part of the parents. The young people have many visitors who would be in the parents' way if they received them in the main dwelling.

CHASTITY

In spite of the free association between adolescents and the almost complete lack of chaperonage, girls are usually chaste before marriage and sometimes retain their virginity to the age of twenty. Chastity in itself does not seem to increase greatly a girl's desirability, but girls are taught that intercourse at a too early age, and especially promiscuity, are likely to lead to sterility. 836

Among the Tanala Menabe the standard for married women seems to be somewhat lower and a wife's unfaithfulness is taken rather lightly. The husband has the legal right to divorce her for it, but will not do so unless he has tired of her. He will scold or even beat her, but the matter soon blows over. He may beat her lover, if he is strong enough and angry enough, but he cannot bring a legal action against him or collect damages. At the same time, wife lending seems to be unknown. The Tanala Ikongo take unfaithfulness rather more seriously and usually divorce for it. This is probably due to their contact with the southeast coast tribes, who have a strong feeling against it. 837

Premarital chastity on the part of a man would be taken as a confession of impotence and would make it difficult for him to find a wife. After marriage the standard for men is still low, except that they are expected to be faithful during a wife's pregnancy. 836

INCEST

Incest is a very serious crime, highly offensive to the gods and ancestors. Although a first offense may be compounded by a special ceremony and sacrifice, a second or third offense is usually punished by disownment and expulsion from the gens. There also seems to be an unformulated belief that it affects the fertility of the lineage as a whole and may even injure its crops and limit the increase 684

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

585 After the betrothal the girl continues to live with her parents, sometimes for as much as two months. The period is not fixed and in the Zafimaniry gens her relatives try to prolong it as much as possible. The boy visits her and sleeps with her. She spends her time in making her part of the equipment for the new house: mats, baskets, and a raffia mosquito net and pillows. The boy prepares the house and his share of the equipment. On an auspicious day a number of the boy's relatives go to get the girl. The two families usually agree on the number in advance, so that each will know how many people they will have to feast. The girl's family feasts the delegation at her house. An equal number of her relatives then accompany her to the boy's house, where they are feasted in turn. After the feast, all her relatives go home. The young people live with [591] the groom's father for a week, then go to their own house. Among the Zafimaniry the bride, on entering the house of her parents-in-law for the first time, presents them with her best mat and receives their thanks and blessing.

The ceremonies are the same for plural as for first marriages, but are usually somewhat less elaborate, with smaller feasts. The same holds for remarriages of widows or divorced women.

PLURAL MARRIAGES

837 Polyandry is mentioned in some Tanala legends, but it is interwoven with other fabulous details and there is no reason to believe that it ever existed as a recognized institution. In making the *ai/ananganga* ("blood brotherhood") pact, men often agree to hold their wives in common, but they rarely if ever do this when they live in the same village. The community of wives, therefore, resolves itself into reciprocal sexual hospitality. This is operative even during the absence of the husband.

595 Polygyny is still common. Under the old regime there was no limit to the number of wives the king might have. The last king of Ambohimanga had thirty-three. Other men are limited to four but rarely take the full quota. The number depends on their wealth and personal desirability.

It is permissible for a man to marry sisters as plural wives, but there is some feeling against it and it is rare. It is believed that sisters will be more jealous of each other than wives who come from different families. The Zafindriantrova gens has prohibited the practice in recent years, due to one sister having poisoned another who was a fellow wife.